REMARKS

ON A

SERMON,

ABOUT

Corrupting the WORD of GOD.

PREACH'D BY

Tho. Gipps, Rector of *Bury*,

On a Publick Occasion, *July* 11. 1696.

Wherein the

DISSENTERS

ARE

Fully Vindicated

Against his *Unjust Accusations.*

By J. Owen, Minister of the Gospel at *Oswestry.*

COM. ix. *Thou shalt not bear false Witness against thy Neighbour.*

Et tuus Fronto, non ut [illegible]tor testimonium fecit, sed Convicium ut Orator asperſit. M[illegible]uel. Octav. p. 92. Edit. Oxon.

London, Printed for *Zachary Whitworth*, Bookseller in *Manchester*, 1697.

To the Right Honourable

WILLIAM

Earl of *Derby*, Lord of *Man*, and the *Isles*, &c.

My Lord,

IT was a received Maxim in the *Roman Judicatories*, *To Condemn no Man till he were admitted to answer for himself*, which being agreeable to the Laws of Natural Justice, and the prevailing Sentiments of Mankind, I doubt not, but will pass with Your Honour, for an equitable Rule of Judgment.

The *Rector* of *Bury* hath Publish'd a horrid Charge against a great Body of People, the *Dissenting Protestants*, of Corrupting the Word of God, by Printing the Word *Ye* instead of *We* in *Acts* 6. 3. and presumes to *shelter himself under your Great and Honourable Name*, by which he hopes to render it uncontestable, and to give it a more general Acceptation in the World.

Now, My Lord, since he Appeals to *Cesar*, to *Cesar* he shall go. All the Favour we desire, is a Full and Fair Hearing of our Cause, which will bear the strictest Disquisition of a severe Judicature.

Our *Accuser* saith, the first Corruption happen'd in the Year 1638. when the *Presbyterians* were in the Ascendant, and that it was then begun, and continued ever since in several Editions to promote the People's Power of setting up their own Teachers.

But I have clearly Prov'd, that the *Presbyterians* were in no Power then; that they are as much against the People's Ordaining Ministers as the Bishops are; that there were far more corrupt Editions of that Place under King *Charles* II. when the Press was intirely at the Devotion of the *Bishops*, than in the Year's between 40. and 60. when the *Anti-Episcopal Party* had the Power of the Press.

I can find but *Three* Corrupt Editions during the long Parliament, and I have met with *Three and Thirty* under King *Charles* II. which I humbly Preſent to your Lordſhip's wiſe Conſideration, not doubting but the Intereſts of Truth have the Preference in your Eſteem to the inſinuating Artifices of officious Servants.

The *Rector*, who Honours himſelf with the Title of your Lordſhips *Chaplain*, knowing its below your Greatneſs to examine his Matters, and preſuming your Lordſhip would take all upon truſt (as one would think a Noble Perſon might rely much upon the Word of a Chaplain) thought he might impoſe herein upon your Honour, as no doubt he hath upon many others: But the Duty we owe to all, and to Perſons of Honour eſpecially, as well as our own neceſſary Vindication, hath obliged us to Expoſe the Falſeneſs of his Accuſations, and to recommend this true Narrative of the Caſe to your Lordſhips Exact and Impartial Judgment.

I humbly crave your Lordſhips Pardon for this Addreſs, occaſion'd by that of the Rector's, in which he very rudely Proſtitutes your Honour to the Patronage of the vileſt Calumny.

I leave him to your Lordſhip's juſt Cenſure, and wiſh him more Sincere Affection to the Truth, more Deference towards his Superiours, and more Charity towards his Neighbours, eſpecially in a Conjuncture, when our Civil as well as our Religious Intereſts do ſo loudly Call for the Exerciſe of 'em.

But I muſt not tire your Lordſhip's Patience, and therefore ſhall only add an Apprecation of all Bleſſings to your Honour, and beg leave to ſubſcribe my ſelf.

Right Honourable,

Your Lordſhip's moſt Humble

And moſt Obedient Servant

In our Great Lord and Maſter

JESUS CHRIST.

James Owen.

The PREFACE.

THESE *Papers were occasion'd by a Sermon Preach'd at* Christ's Church *in* Manchester, *by Mr.* Tho. Gips, Rector *of* Bury, against Corrupting the Word of God. *I'll give the Reader an Idea of the Sermon, before I enter on the main Point.*

His Text is in Prov. 30. 6. Add thou not unto his Words, lest he reprove Thee, and thou be found a Liar.

After some Explication, he saith, The Text is level'd against all manner of Corrupting the Word, *p.* 2.

One eminent Instance of which I shall produce by and by, the Chief Reason of my undertaking this Subject.

The whole Sermon consists of but 28 *Pages, and yet he overlooks the* Chief Reason *of his Undertaking, till he comes to the* 20th *Page, in these Words,* and now I am come at length to the Point I chiefly aim'd to insist on. *'Tis a sign he wanted materials for his* Chief Point, *when he allows it but so little Room in his Sermon, tho' he had promised* to husband his Time as Thriftily as might be, because his Argument cou'd not easily be compriz'd in one single Discourse, *p.* 1.

In handling of it, he promiseth, 1. *To lay before us* Negatively, *what it is not to add or diminish.* 2. Positively, *what it is.*

1. *Negatively, It is not adding,* 1. *When we explain Scripture,* p. 2.

2. *It is not diminishing, when we omit the Hebrew Titles of the* Psalms, *and here he takes occasion to quarrel with one Mr.* De Laune, *who it seems had censured this Omission in the* Psalms *used in the* Liturgy, p. 3.

He calls upon the Dissenters to prove those Hebrew Titles to be Original and Essential Parts of Scriptures.

I will not enter into this Controversie, but shall only take Notice, that the Titles are as ancient *as the* Psalms *themselves, for ought appears to the contrary, they being in all the Hebrew and Greek Copies that ever I have seen: That the* Jewish Church *receiv'd 'em as Parts of Scripture, and they are most of 'em translated by the LXX, and by* Theodotion, Symmachus *and* Aquila, *as also by the* Targumist, *supposed to be* R. Joseph: *That they are receiv'd in the* Christian Church *as Canonical Scripture,* Jerom *translates them in his Version, and they are in the Modern Versions,* French, Dutch, British, *and in the* English *Church-Bibles: That some of them are undeniably Canonical, as that of* Psalm 18. *mention'd in* 2 Sam. 22. *Others of them must be prefixed by the Penman, or by a Person Divinely Inspired, for they refer to Passages of History not mention'd in the Body of the* Psalm. *Such are the Titles of* Psalm 3. *and* 30. *and* 34. *and* 54. *and* 56, &c. *The Title of the* 90. Psalm, Is a Prayer of *Moses,* the Man of God. *He is not mention'd at all in this* Psalm, *nor is this* Psalm *mention'd in all his other Writings.*

If

If the Titles, or any one of them, be Eſſential Parts of Scripture; the Rector hath help'd Mr. De Laune *to a ſtrong Argument, againſt the omitting of them,* viz. *that it is* a diminiſhing from the Word of God.

It had been his Diſcretion to have omitted this Head of his Sermon; but ſome People can't but expoſe their unthought-of-Faults by an unſeaſonable and weak attempt to cover them.

He asks, Why the Titles are not always Tranſlated? *The Biſhops cou'd beſt reſolve that Queſtion, whoſe Tranſlation the Diſſenters uſe. His other Queſtions there, are not worth the Anſwering,* p. 3, 4.

3. It is not a diminiſhing from the Word *(ſaith he)* when we read ſome Verſes of a Chapter, omitting the reſt for that Time, *p.* 5.

But what if they be omitted at all Times? *As ſome Chapters and Books are in the* Kalender; *it ſeems, according to the Rector's Reſtriction, a diminiſhing from the Word of God.*

I leave him and Mr. De Laune *to argue, Whether the Epiſtles and Goſpels do not in divers Places ruine the Scope and Connexion, which is the Subject of this and the two next Pages,* p. 6, 7.

4. It is not adding to the Word *(continues he)* when ſeveral Paſſages of Scripture, are caſt into one Complex Senſe.

Here he falls foul upon Mr. De Laune *again, for affirming that in the Liturgy-Tranſlation of the* Pſalms, *three whole Verſes are foiſted into the* 14th. Pſalm.

To this he Anſwers, that thoſe Verſes are in the Epiſtle to the *Romans,* Cap. 3. and in the LXX Tranſlation, which for ought he knows is of as good Authority, as the *Hebrew* at this Day is, *and to be preferr'd before the* Hebrew *in this* 14*th.* Pſalm, *p.* 8, 9.

That thoſe additional Verſes are in Rom. 3. *no Body Queſtions; and that they were tranſcribed out of that Epiſtle into the LXX Verſion,* Jerom *poſitively affirms,* Prefat. *Lib.* 16. in Iſa. *And he adds in the ſame Place, that theſe Verſes are not in the LXX Tranſlation, and that none of the* Greek *Interpreters have Commented on them.*

It is certain, they are not to be found in moſt of the Greek *Copies, Manuſcript and Printed,* vid. Fr. Luc. Burgſ. in Lib. Notat. ad varias Lect. Vulg. Edit.

I will not Diſpute at this time the Authority of the LXX, but if it be as good as the preſent Hebrew *Copy, it is very uncertain what becomes of the Rector's* Text, *for it is not in my Edition of the* Septuagint, *Printed at* Cambr. 1665 Juxta exemplar Vaticanum, *which is one of the beſt Copies. Thus the Rector by maintaining one abſurdity runs himſelf into more, and by advancing the* Septuagint, *hath loſt his Text.*

We have Reaſon to believe that the Hebrew *Copies were incorrupt in our Saviours Time, who never charged the* Jews *with corrupting the Scriptures. And* Philo *not long after, writes, that* even unto his Times, for the ſpace of above 2000 Years, not one Word had ever been chang'd in the Law of the *Hebrews,* and that every Jew would ſooner dye a hundred Deaths, than ſuffer the Law to be chang'd in any one Point. *Phil de Egreſs. fil.* Iſr. *ab* Ægypto. *This Teſtimony is cited by* Euſeb. *Præpar.* Evang. VIII. 2.

The

The Invention of the Masora, *in which all the Verses, Words, and Letters of all the Books of the Old Testament are number'd, has been an effectual means to preserve the Purity of the* Hebrew *Copies. If it be as old as* Ezra *the Scribe, as the Learned* Buxtorf *conceives, it renders it impossible that any Corruption should have crept into the* Hebrew *Copies*, vid. Buxt. Tiberias.

But if it were written after the Talmud, *by the* Jews *of* Tiberias *about the Year* 500. *as* Elias Levita, Capellus, *and others think, it has undeniably secured the* Hebrew *Copies from all Corruption since that Time. And it is highly improbable, they should be corrupted between* Philo's *Time, and the Invention of the* Masora, *according to this latter Hypothesis. For the* Hebrew *Copies which* Jerom *had towards the latter end of the Fourth Century were incorrupt, and had not the additional Verses in* Psalm 14. *Nor can we imagine that the* Jews *of that Age had degenerated from the Zeal of their Ancestors for the Purity of the Law.*

The Rector himself allows the Masora *to be before the Birth of Christ*, for *saith he*, The *Jews* were Religious to Superstition, as may be thought, counting the very Letters of the Bible to preserve it intire: Hereunto our Lord alludes *in* Mat. 5. 18. *p.* 13.

On the other Hand, it's certain we have not a pure Version of the LXX at this Day, as all the Learned agree. And Dr. Lightfoot *affirms more than once, that the Translation that goes under the Name of the LXX was drest with* more Craft than Sincerity *by the first Interpreters, and gives many Instances of it,* Vol. 1. *p.* 401, 402 667. 806. *and* Vol 1. p. 1004, 1005.

It is unfair therefore in the Rector to depress the Authority of the Hebrew *Copies in favour of the LXX (which differs greatly from 'em) and thereby tempt People to question the Purity of our authorized* English *Bibles, which are all Translations of the* Hebrew.

We agree with him in the next Head, that

5. It is not corrupting the Word, when we translate it into Vulgar Tongues, *p.* 9. to *p.* 12.

6. It is not adding to the Word, when a new Prophet arising delivers some further Messages to the Churches, which are affixt to the Canon of the Scripture; so all the following Books of Scripture, notwithstanding my Text, were added to the Canon unto the end of *Revelations*, where (for ought we yet know) the Book is shut up, *p.* 12.

Here he seems uncertain, whether we may not yet expect new Revelation, *and a* new Canon of Scripture. *For our parts we are Content with that we have, and shall leave this Point to be concerted between the Rector and the Quakers.*

2. *He shews Positively, when we add or diminish from the Word.*

1. We diminish, when we cast away any, never so little Part of it, *p.* 13.

I leave it to Consideration, Whether the Titles of the Psalms *be not a little Part of the Word of God, and own'd for such in our authorized Bibles.*

But yet Interest has a Byass, *adds he*, instance M. (*he would say* Justin Martyr) has charged the *Jews* with this Practice.

Justin M. charges them with corrupting the LXX, but not the Original Hebrew, *which he ought to have taken Notice of.*

2. Then

2. Then we diminish when we reject whole Books, as the *Sadducees* and *Samaritans* of old did, all but the five Books of *Moses*, p. 14.

It is a Vulgar Error, that the Sadducees *and* Samaritans *rejected all the Old Testament, but the five Books of* Moses, *occasion'd by a Passage in* Josephus. That the *Sadducees* received the Law only, *Antiq.* Jude XVIII. 2. *Whereas he speaks of the* written Law *in Opposition to the* Oral Law, *which the* Pharisees *received. Thus he explains himself,* Antiq. Jude XIII. 18.

Dr. Lightfoot *gives Instances of their owning other parts of Scripture,* Vol 2. *p.* 541, 542.

3. We diminish from the Word, when we lay it aside as not necessary or not the Supream Rule of Faith, *p.* 14.

This implies, as if if there were some other, at least subordinate Rules of Faith. What these are, he does not think fit to tell us? We know no Rule of Divine Faith but the Holy Scriptures.

From the 15*th to the* 20*th Page, he well asserts the* Sufficiency, Perspicuity and Supream Authority of the Scriptures, *p.* 15. to *p.* 20.

Were this Principle practically acknowledg'd, it would soon heal our Breaches, by disposing Men to lay aside the unscriptural Terms *of Christian Communion, which have been the fatal Engines of Disunion and Schism.*

4. We diminish from the Word, when we add any thing to it, *p.* 20.

He gives two Instances of this, 1. When any thing is tack'd unto the Word not belonging to it, as is the *Apocrypha* by the *Papists*, but I hasten, *saith the Rector.*

But why in so much haste? You must know he is upon a tender Point, which would not be long dwelt upon. But if he be not in too much haste, I will tell him a Story in his Ear, of a Sort of People that leave out a considerable Part of Canonical Scripture, as the 1*st. and* 2*d. Books of* Chronicles, *much of* Ezekiel, the Song of *Solomon, and most of the* Revelation, *and substitute in the room of it, a great Part of the* Apocrypha, *and among other Passages the fabulous Story of* Bell *and* Dragon, *to be Read in the Publick Congregation, for two Months of the Year: Which tempts Ignorant People to fancy the Bible is not compleat without the* Apocrypha.

But we must not detain him too long from his Chief Point, *to which he is come at length under the next Head.*

2. We both add to the Word and diminish from it, when we alter it, especially so as that it carries quite another Sense, than what was intended by the Spirit of God. And now I am come at length *(saith he)* to the Point I chiefly aim'd to insist on, *p.* 20.

The prosecuting of this Point takes up the eight last Pages.

Having given this Scheme of the Sermon, we will now follow him to his Eminent Instance of corrupting the Word, the chief Reason of his Undertaking this Subject.

THE

THE Diſſenters Vindicated FROM Mr. *G I P*'s Unjuſt Accuſations.

CHAP I.

Some General Conſiderations relating to the Charge.

THE *Rector* of *Bury*, whoſe Genius leads him to *New Diſcoveries*, obliged us laſt Summer with a *Tentamen Novum* (ſo he ſtiles his Diſcourſe) in which he *endeavours* to prove, That the *Diſſenters* have *no Miniſtry*: He now favours us with *another*, to repreſent 'em in effect, as *no Chriſtians*, for he Charges them with no leſs a Crime than contributing to the Undermining the *Foundation* of. *Chriſtianity*. *p.* 25, 26.

I have already examined his *Tentamen*, and ſhall now make ſome Remarks upon his *Sermon*.

He tells us in the *Title-Page*, That it was Preach'd *upon a Publick Occaſion*, that is, as I am inform'd, at the *Biſhop's Viſitation*. It was *Concio ad Clerum*, and if he wanted *Courage* to be his *Lordſhip*'s *Remembrancer* in the Duties of his *high ſtation*, one might have expected a Teſtimony from him againſt the *ſhameful Scandals* of ſome of the *Clergy*, too notorious to be either palliated or deny'd: Or if he durſt not Expoſe their *Immoralties*, leſt he ſhould ſeem to *bewray his own Neſt* (which he ſeems tender of, *p.* 22.) was there no occaſion of exciting his Brethren to greater diligence and application in their ſeveral Provinces. Something of this nature would have ſuited the preſent *occaſion*, and have become a *faithful* Diſpenſer of the *Oracles of God*.

But the *Rector* had other work to do. His buſineſs was not ſo much with the *Auditory* that was *preſent*, as with a ſort of People that *were out of hearing*, and theſe he comes not to *reprove* for *open miſcarriages*, but to *accuſe* of ſome ſecret *Crimes*, which no body but himſelf pretends to know any thing of. All the Concern he had with the *Reverend Aſſembly* to which he Preach'd, was to endeavour to raiſe in them an *ill-natur'd paſſion*, (which he miſcalls *Zeal*) towards an *innocent People*, whom he wretchedly miſrepreſents, and renders as *black* as Hell.

He Charges 'em with no leſs a Crime than *Corrupting the Word of God*. p. 2. & 24.

And tho his *Diligence and Obſervation has not been a little* (as he tells us *p.* 22.) in ſearching the ſeveral Editions of the Bible, he can find but one inſtance of this Corruption in the whole Bible, and that amounts to no more than the change of one Letter for ano-

ther, *viz.* *w* into *y* in *Acts* 6. 3. *whom* we *may appoint*, so it ought to be; but some Editions have it, *whom* ye *may appoint*, by an over-sight of the *Printer*, who has substituted a *y* for a *w*. This Literal Mistake might easily happen, the upper part of a *Roman* y being a single v.

Doth not this inquisitive Man labour under a sad deficiency of matter to accuse us of? and is he not hard put to it to *seek occasion against us*, when he is glad to Muster up the *Errata's* of the Press, and turn them into *Presbyterian Crimes*.

This is another *Tentamen novum*, and the Truth is, all our Authors Productions are like these of *Africa*, *new* and *monstrous*?

I can scarce think him so *Weak*, as to believe his own *Charge*, it is so very *silly* and *inconsistent*, that nothing but the *Sin* and *Malice*, which appear in every part of it, can preserve it from being *ridiculous*.

However, he would have others believe, That there is a World of Consequences depending upon these two Words *we* and *ye*; *We* refers to the *Apostles*, and *authorizes* the *Bishops* to appoint *Deacons* or *Parish-Ministers* (saith he) *Ye* refers to the People, and gives them the Power of appointing Ministers. *p.* 21.

For this Reason (affirms he) the *Presbyterians* have corrupted this place (*Acts* 6. 3.) to *advance the Peoples Power to set up their own Teachers*. (*p.* 23, 24, 25.)

He is a Man of *unparallel'd Confidence*, that dare undertake to perswade the World the truth of this Accusation, which is so *notorious a slander*, that I do not think any degree of Credulity, below that which bids defiance to all our Senses, can entertain it under any other Notion.

The *Presbyterians*, as their very enemies must acknowledge, admit none into the Ministry without the *laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, and they take the Deacons in *Acts* 6. (as I shall prove anon) for *Ministers of Tables*, and not for *Ministers of the Gospel*: So that their Principles and Practice are directly opposite to the Hypothesis which he pretends is favoured by this corruption. He acquits the *Episcopal Party* from a design'd corrupting of this place, because the Corruption is inconsistent with their Principles, *p.* 24. By the same reason he must acquit the *Presbyterians* also, or involve himself and Party in the same guilt.

I do here solemnly Protest in the Presence of the Supream Judge, that I never knew any *Protestant Dissenter*, Minister or Layman, that express'd his Approbation of that corrupt Reading in *Acts* 6. 3. and I believe very few of them ever took notice of it, for most Editions of the Bible have it not.

If the Charge exhibited against us be false, as I shall anon demonstrate beyond Contradiction, our *Accuser is found a liar* (to use the words of his Text, *Prov.* 30. 6.) and condemn'd out of his own Mouth of *One of the most detestable sins in the sight both of God and Man*, so he calls a *Lye*, *p.* 2.

We plead *not guilty* to the Charge, and we hope the *Rector* will not require us to prove a *Negative*, the Proof lies on his side. If a bold and malicious *Accusation* may pass for a *Crime*, who can be innocent? Our Accuser ought in Justice to produce most clear and convincing proofs of this *Villany*, which he has not yet offer'd; his *circumstantial proof* shall be consider'd before we part with him.

It is the manner of some men (as he for good reasons observed) *to accuse stoutly——— for the working be proved, yet something will stick*, p. 5. Which Political Maxim he seems to have well digested, as will appear in the following Charge, for thus he speaks:

'I will not be so positive as to aver, that it was at First industriously done, yet I 'must call into Question the *Dissenters*, as persons *suspected* to have *secretly* contributed 'to the corruption of this place, at least, to the continuance and encrease of it. *p.* 23.

1. This Accusation puts me in mind of a form of Accusation not unlike this in *Minucius Fœlix*, who brings in *Cæcilius* a Heathen, charging the Christians with *incestuous mixtures*, Thyestean *Feasts*, *worshipping the Head of an Ass*, *and the* Genitalia *of their Priests*; and not being able to prove so vile a Calumny, he minceth the matter, and saith, *nescio an falsa, certè occultis ac nocturnis sacris apposita suspicio. i. e.* I am not certain but the Report may

may be false, but their Secret and Night-meetings may be sufficient to ground a *suspicion* on. †

Both these Calumniators were visibly acted by one and the same *Genius*, which enabled them to give an account of Secret Actions, and to turn Suspicions into Proofs. Only the *Pagan* is the more honest of the two, for he Reports but *what he heard* * ; and seems to doubt of the Truth of it, but our Christian Rector glories in being the Discoverer of this great Secret, and Reports a Figment of his own Brain, for an Undoubted Truth.

It would make any one but a Man of Mr. *G.*'s effrontery to blush, that a *Heathen* should out-shine him in Candour and Modesty.

2. If the *Dissenters* have secretly corrupted this place, how comes he to know it? Did they make him their *Confessor*, and reveal this Secret to him, as the only Person fit to be trusted with it? That cannot be, for it would have furnished him with a Direct Proof, which he does not pretend to, *p.* 23. Or doth he dream *Dreams*, or see *Visions*? Or perhaps, such a Man as he can *Divine*, and by a *Prophetic Sagacity*, tell the Words that we speak in our Bed-Chambers.

But we must not be too curious in our Inquiry, how the Rector came to discover this Secret Artifice of the *Dissenters*, for that also is a Secret, which he has not thought fit to publish.

The Truth is, this looks like the Tale which the *Jewish Priests* put into the Mouths of the Souldiers that watch'd the Sepulcher of Jesus Christ. *Matth.* 28. 13. *Say ye, his Disciples came by Night, and stole him away while we slept.* If they were asleep, how could they tell the Disciples stole him away? But it was enough to satisfie some People, that the thing was *secretly* done, and the Disciples might well *be call'd into question as persons suspected.* The Soldiers were rare Witnesses in the Case, for they were asleep when the *Feat* was done, as the Overseers of the Press were, as the Rector affirms, when the first Corrupt Edition happen'd at *Cambridge*, *p.* 23. Whether the *Jewish Priests* and the *Rector* have compared Notes together, I know not; but it's no new thing for *Good Wits to jump*, and concur in *abstruse Discoveries.*

3. Had not the Rector examined the *Errata* of the Press, more out of ill will to the *Dissenters*, than good will to the Publick, his great *diligence* and *observation* (which he brags of, *p.* 22.) might have discovered more faults than this one in the several Editions of the Bible.

But that was not to his purpose, and it would have been inconsistent with *the Point which he chiefly aimed to insist on*, *p.* 20. which was the accusing of the *Presbyterians* with Corrupting the Word of God. Had he searched for other Errors of the Press, many would have occurr'd as considerable as this of *Ye* for *We*, which he cou'd not with any colour, charge upon the *Dissenters.*

It is a thing much to be lamented, That several Editions of the Holy Bible, especially the smaller Volumes, which pass through more hands than the larger, are very un-correct, and abound with such Errors as are destructive of the sense.

It's the Province of some of the Bishops (as I am inform'd) to take care that the several Editions of the Bible be well done: And I humbly conceive, it were an Undertaking worthy the *Supreme* Overseers of the Flock, at least to depute others to provide wholsome Food for them, by more Correct Impressions of the Bible.

I have a small *duodecimo* Bible by me, Printed at *London* by *Charles Bill*, and the Executrix of *Thomas Newcomb*, 1691. which is abominably faulty. It is right in *Act.* 6. 3. *whom* we *may appoint*, and so is free from the Corruption charg'd upon the *Dissenters*; but has several others as bad as that. For Instance,

Eph. 1. 4. *According as he hath chosen us*—— *that* she *should be holy*: It should be, *that* we *should be holy.* Ἵνας ἡμᾶς ἁγίους.

† *Min. Fœl. Oct.* p. 27, 28. * Audio eos turpissimæ pecudis caput Asini consecratum—— venerari.—— alii eos ferunt—— *Ibid.*

Have ſome Bibles *ye* for *we* in *Act.* 6. 3.? So have others *ſhe* for *we* in *Eph.* 1. 4. Is this Corruption alſo to be imputed to the Diſſenters?

In a *Quarto* Edition of the Bible, by *Hays* at *Cambridge* 1675. *Job* 6. 21. inſtead of ye *are nothing*, 'tis Printed, we *are nothing*. So that *we* and *ye* are eaſily miſtaken one for another.

The Rector is a Man of Diligence and Obſervation, and would do well to find out the Author and the Reaſons of this Corruption.

Gal. 5. 21——— *of the which I* the *you before*——— It ought to be ——*of the which I tell you before.*
2 Tim. 1. 18. *The Lord grant unto him that he may* and *mercy*; inſtead of—— find *mercy.*
Acts 19. 26. *They be no* Goods *which are made with hands*, It ſhould be read, *They be no* Gods———
Titus 3. 2. *Put 'em in mind*—— *to be* on *brawlers*, It ſhould be no *brawlers.*
James 5. 12. *Let your yea be yea, and your nay*, day; It ſhould be read—— *and your nay, nay.*
1 Pet. 2. 17. *Love the* brothergood, for *brotherhood.*
Heb. 12. 13. oul *of the way*, for *out of the way.*
Rom. 1. 18. *who hold* we *truth* (for *the truth*) *in unrighteouſneſs.*
Hoſh. 8. 6. *the* Caſt (for *the* Calf) *of Samaria.*
——12. 11. ſurety (for *ſurely*) *they are vanity.*
Iſa. 63. 2. ——treateth *in the Wine-fat*, for *treadeth in*——
Matth. 17. 25. *Jeſus prevented* how, for *him.*
Act 10. 34, *God is no* reſecter (for *reſpecter*) *of perſons.*
——15. 2. them (for *they*) *determined that* Paul *and* Barnabas——
——27. 13. ſort, ly, for *ſoftly.*
Rom. 2. 14. Laws, *for Law*, νόμων.
——2. 18. approved, for *approveſt*, δοκιμάζεις.
Jer. 23. 36. *and the* battle (it ſhould be *the* burthen) *of the Lord ſhall ye mention no more.*
——16. 13. others *Gods*, for *other* Gods.
——18. 3. *on* me *Wheels*, for *on* the *Wheels.*
Pſalm. 36. 8. fatners, for *fatneſs of thy Houſe.*
Matth. 20. 12. hear *of the day*, for *heat of the day.*

I cou'd mention many more *Errors* of the like nature, which either make no ſenſe, or a corrupt one. But the *Rector*'s Diligence and Obſervation can overlook ſuch little Errors as theſe, as not pertinent to the Deſign he had in hand, which was only to diſcover ſuch Corruptions as may ſeem to concern the Biſhops Intereſt, or give him any occaſion to *calumniate* the Diſſenters.

Have a care of ſuch Errors as may ſeem to favour the *Diſſenters*, and to weaken the *Biſhops power*, and this mighty man of Diligence, Obſervation and Faithfulneſs, *p.* 22. can eaſily paſs by all the reſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

In which his Arguments *are Answer'd.*

BEFORE we come to his Proofs, we'll take a view of the Charge, and its Aggravations, as they lie scattered here and there, in his Epistle and Sermon.

The summ of the Charge is, "That he suspects the *Presbyterians* have cor-"rupted *Acts* 6. 3. in the Year 1638, and secretly promoted the Coruption ever "since. *p.* 22. 23, 27.

The Aggravations follow:

"Some People (saith he) will doubtless be angry, that their *foul-play* is brought upon "the stage, and thus openly taxt—— Again, "The Error must be confest, and believ'd "a *wilful one*—— "When the *Presbyterian* Government (or *Congregational*, I can't tell "which) is publickly maintain'd by a Text of Scripture, manifestly corrupted, 'tis high "time to make the World sensible of the Artifice. *Epist.*

"The Adversaries of Christianity, with design to overthrow the whole frame of our "Religion, have already endeavoured to take advantage of the numerous and various "Lections. What will they say, when they observe the purest Kirk in the World (as is "pretended) tampering with, and refining upon the Word of God? Let's not dare to "suborn any false Witness whatever, much less out of the Word of Truth; let's leave "that *Vile Artifice* to our Adversaries on both hands. *P.* 26.

"What if one Bible of every Edition thus depraved were burnt, to expose the *craftiness* of those *Circumcellians* among us, who to advance their *Design*, do not stick, it "seems, to promote it by *Falshood*; and grounding themselves upon a meer Error of "the Press, as we will suppose it was at first, *deceiving, and being deceived*, do *lye against* "*the Holy Ghost*, and bring a scandal upon the Word of God, and our Holy Religion, *p.* 27.

"Is it possible to believe that one unhappy mistake should be so successful, as to have "got into so many Editions, without the helping hand of some wily and undermining "*Schismatick*? p. 28.

The *Charge* you see, is very black, and represents the *Dissenters* as the worst of Men. That give advantage to the Enemies of Christianity, That undermine the Scriptures of Truth, And promote their Opinions by the *vilest Artifice*.

But when the Accusation is duly consider'd, and the Arguments by which it is supported, are impartially examined, they will be found to prove neither more nor less, than that the *Rector* is as destitute of *Truth* as he is of *Charity*.

But let's hear how he proves his Charge.

He introduces it with this Question, "Who then brought in this false Reading, (of "*ye* for *we* in *Acts* 6. 3. *p.* 23.) And what Party encouraged and promoted it since?

To which he answers, "A clear and full Discovery would deserve a *Hecatomb*. And "tho I will not promise so much, yet something I have to offer towards it, which tho "it amounts not to a direct Proof against any Persons, yet I think, may pass for a good "Circumstantial one.

'Tis

1. 'Tis observable here, That he doth not pretend to a direct Proof, and yet through his whole Discourse would have it taken for granted, That his Accusation is as true as Gospel. He would craftily insinuate a Belief into his Reader, of what he hesitates about himself. One while he positively charges the *Dissenters* with Foul-play, and saith, "Their "Errour must be confess'd, and believ'd a wilful one. *Epist. Dedic.*

Another while he only questions the *Dissenters* as persons suspected to have secretly contributed to the corruption of this place, at least to the continuance of it, *p.* 23.

And in another place he saith, "They do not stick, it seems, to promote their Design "by falshood, *p.* 27.

Again, "Admit they did not contrive the Corruption of this place, yet now, belike, "contribute to the confirming it, *p.* 24.

Here's a manifest inconsistency in the Charge, which spoils the Credit of the whole Story.

All the Evidence amounts to no more, than that it *seems* to be so, and *belike* it is so. And yet with what assurance doth he accuse them of *lying against the Holy Ghost?* p. 27. 'Tis well he is not endued with the *plenitude of Apostolical power*, to inflict upon us the punishment of *Ananias* and *Sapphira:* But to make up the defect of this power, he moves those in *Authority to expose the Craftiness of those* Circumcellians *among us, who promote their design by falshood*, ibid.

By the way, I cannot but Note the *new Name* he is pleased to give the *Dissenters*. It seems he had read somewhere of the *Circumcelliones*, a barbarous Sect of the *Donatists*, that murther'd such as oppos'd their Opinions, and laid violent hands on themselves that they might be thought to have suffer'd Martyrdom by the hands of the *Catholicks*. †

His Tongue is his own to call what Names he pleaseth, but he knows who saith, *If any man among you seem to be Religious, and bridleth not his Tongue—— this man's Religion is vain*, James 1. 26.

You must not wonder that he overlooks a *little Rule of Grammar* in rendring *Circumcelliones* Circumcellians, for he does not seem to tye himself to such *Scripture-Rules* * as concern the ordering of our Speech, when his Choler is up against the *Dissenters*.

He is uncertain whom to fix this Charge upon, whether on a single person, or a Party of Men combin'd together to corrupt the Word of God.

He seems to point at a single person in the following words, "Is it possible to believe "that one unhappy Instance should get into so many Editions, without the helping hand "of some wily and undermining Schismatick, *p.* 28. In other places he taxeth the *Dissenters* in general, *p.* 23. Sometimes he makes the *Presbyterians* the guilty Party. *p.* 22. 24.

And in another Humour he lays it on the *Presbyterians* or *Congregational Men*, but confesseth he *can't tell which*. Epist. Dedic. So that the Accusation falls upon a sort of *individuum vagum*, which he is to seek for.

Thus the Subjects of the Charge are as uncertain as the Evidence of it.

3. All he pretends to, is a sort of *Circumstantial Proof*, as he calls it, and upon this *sandy foundation*, he builds his whole Charge, which he aggravates with all the little *Rhetorick* he is Master of.

He suggests Four Arguments by way of *Circumstantial Proof*, which are as follows.

Argument I.

"I must call the *Dissenters* into Question (saith he) because the Alteration happened in "the Year 1638. *Presbytery* being then in the Ascendant, I say, just in that nick of time "when all things were in Preparation, and tended to the Subversion of *Episcopacy, Scot-*

† Aug. *de Hær.* * *Matth.* 5. 22. 2.

"*land*

" *land* having already made a Conſpiracy, and bound 'emſelves under a Curſe to Extir-
" pate it; and *England*, even a great part of the Univerſities 'emſelves, running into
' the ſame Exceſs of Riot. So that here is a Concurrence of the Circumſtance of Time,
" and a ſhrewd one too, ſufficient to ground a ſuſpicion upon.

To this I Anſwer:

1. Admit there were a *Concurrence of the Circumſtance of time*, Will it follow the Corruption was deſigned? May not two Events happen at the ſame time, that have no relation to one another?

How would he like it, if the *Diſſenters* ſhould charge the *Epiſcopal Party*, of which he is one, with the *falſe Readings* I mention'd above, and ſhould urge for Proof that the Impreſſion came out in 1691, when the *Epiſcopal* Party *had the Aſcendant*, none being admitted to any places of Truſt without Conformity? Would not this way of Arguing look as *ſilly* as it would be *malicious?* Would not the Manager of ſuch a *ridiculous accuſation*, eſpecially in a *Publick Sermon*, be judg'd fitter for *Bedlam* than a *Pulpit?* This way of Reaſoning, if I may *Catachreſtically* call it ſo, is the ſame with that of the *Rector's*.

The above-mention'd Errors of the Preſs were in 91, when the *Epiſcopal* Party were more in the Aſcendant than the *Presbyterians* in 38. Here is a *concurrence of the circumſtance of time*, and yet I am apt to think, the weakeſt *Diſſenter* in the Land has more *Senſe* and *Honeſty* than to charge the *Epiſcopal* Church with the Errors of the Preſs.

2. But to do him Juſtice, the *Rector* is ſo kind to the *Diſſenters* as to Anſwer his own Argument for 'em. His Argument pretends to prove from the *circumſtance of time*, that the firſt alteration of *we* into *ye*, was deſign'd: But himſelf acknowledges again and again in other places, that the *firſt error* was an *unwilling one*; ſo he ſpeaks in the *Epiſtle*. And in *p.* 27. he calls it an *accidental ſlip*, an *unfortunate overſight*, and a *meer error of the Preſs*. And in *Page* 28, he calls it, *an unhappy miſtake*.

So that his Firſt Argument is impertinent, himſelf being Judge. But for further ſatisfaction, I will add a few Remarks more.

3. He is grievouſly out in his *Chronological Hiſtory*, for *Presbytery* was not in the Aſcendant in *England* in 1638, as he ſuggeſts. Conformity was then at the higheſt, and urged by *Arch-Biſhop Laud* and his *Faction* with great ſeverity.

Many were Suſpended, Deprived and Excommunicated for not reading the *Book of Sports*, to countenance the Prophanation of the Lord's Day in 1637. I find in a *Certificate* of the Biſhop of *Norwich*, towards the latter end of the Year 37, an Account of about Thirty Miniſters Excommunicated and Suſpended *, by which we may gueſs what was done in other Dioceſes.

In 1638 many more were ſuſpended for not Reading the *Common Prayers* in their *Hoods* and *Surplices*, as Dr. *Heylin* affirms. †. " This and other things (ſaith he) kept off the " greateſt part of the Rigid *Calviniſts* from exerciſing their Gifts, as formerly, in great " Market-Towns.

The ſeverities of that time were ſuch, that many were driven to Foreign Countries for ſhelter; ſome to *Holland*, others to *New-England*, whither the Arch-Biſhop deſign'd to purſue 'em, and to *Dragoon* 'em into the *Engliſh* Conformity. Take the Hiſtory of Dr. *Heylin*'s own words, " It was once under Conſultation of the Chief Phyſicians, to ſend " a Biſhop over to them, and *back him with ſome Forces to compel*, if he were not other-" wiſe able to perſwade obedience; but the troubles of *Scotland* ſtrangled this Deſign. §.

The Preſbyterians in 38 were deprived, not only of the *Pulpit*, but of the *Preſs* alſo, and therefore it is a very unlikely Story that they ſhould *Corrupt the Word of God* in that Year.

---

* *Ruſhw. Collect.* Part II. p. 462. † *Life of* Laud, p 365. § *Life of* Laud, p. 369.

Hear

Hear the Hiſtorian: " Nor was the Arch-Biſhop leſs intent upon all Advantages for " keeping down the *Genevian Party*, and hindring them from *Printing* and *Publiſhing* any " thing which might diſturb the Church's Peace, or *Corrupt her Doctrine*. To this End " he procur'd a Decree to be Paſs'd in the *Star-Chamber*, on *July* 1. 1637. to Regulate " *Printing*, and prevent all Abuſes of it, to the diſturbance of the Church.

The Reader may ſee the *Decree* at large in *Ruſhworth* and *Heylin*. The latter has this Remark on it. (*a*) " By means of this Decree the Arch-Biſhop had ſo provided both at " home and abroad, that neither the Patience of the State ſhould be Exerciſed with con- " tinual Libels, nor the Church troubled by unwarrantable and outlandiſh Doctrines.

In purſuance of this *Decree* againſt *Printing* or *Selling Unlicens'd Books*, he hindred the Importation of the *Geneva* Bibles with Notes from *Holland*, where ſome of them had been Seiz'd by the care of *Boſwel*, the Reſident at the *Hague*. In the beginning of 38 he re- ceived advertiſement of a new Impreſſion of thoſe Bibles in *Holland*, deſign'd for *England*, if the terror of this Decree did not ſtop their coming (*b*).

By this it appears what little Credit is to be given to the Rector's *Secret Hiſtory* of the Preſbyterians corrupting the Word of God in 38, when he ſo notoriouſly contradicts the *Publick Hiſtory* of that Time. He might as well have ſaid, That *Epiſcopacy was in the Aſ- cendant* in 1648, as that Preſbytery was ſo in 1638.

But (ſaith he) *all things were in Preparation, and tended to the Subverſion of Epiſcopacy.*

The Preparations were ſo *Secret*, that none but the *Rector* can make a Diſcovery of them, which he hath not yet done, and ſo we leave 'em among the *Chimera's* of his own Invention.

I know nothing in appearance that tended then to the Subverſion of Epiſcopacy in *En- gland*, except *Fines*, *Impriſonments*, *Baniſhments*, and other Severities againſt Conſcientious Men (under the odious Name of *Puritans*) might have ſuch a tendency, by moving the Compaſſions of the People, who are apt to take part with the Perſecuted.

But *Scotland*, ſaith the Rector, *had already made a Conſpiracy, and bound themſelves under a Curſe to Extirpate Epiſcopacy.*

Did the Scotch-Conſpiracy depend upon altering of *we* into *ye*, in *Acts* 6. 3. in the *Cambridge*-Edition? Or did the Alteration depend on the Scotch-Conſpiracy? Was there another *Conſpiracy* between the *Scotch-Conſpirators* and the *Cambridge-Printer*? The Rector, Charitable Man! has the Faith to believe it, but he is not ſo happy as to be able to prove it.

How far the *Scotch-Covenanters bound themſelves under a Curſe to extirpate Epiſcopacy*, I pretend not to determine.

This is plain, that the Covenant which they ſubſcribed in 1638, was the ſame *in matters of Religion*, with the Covenant which was ſign'd long before by *King James* (the *Firſt* of *England*) and the whole Kingdom of *Scotland*. This is expreſly affirmed by K. *Charles* I. in his *Proclamation againſt the Seditious Practices of ſome in* Scotland, Dated at *White-Hall Feb.* 27, In theſe Words:

" That Covenant in our Dear Father's time, was condeſcended unto by him, and ſo " the Subject (at the humble Petition of the *General Aſſembly* it ſelf) permitted by him " to Sign it: We ſay it again, That our Covenant was Rejected by them, becauſe Com- " manded by us; and this is manifeſt, becauſe *for Matters of Religion ours agreed in all* " *things with their own Covenant* (*c*).

I Juſtifie not the Irregularities of that Time, but they were occaſioned by Arch-Biſhop *Laud's Innovations*, contrary to Arch-Biſhop *Spotſwood's* Advice.

King *Charles* I. in the Year 38. Iſſued out a Proclamation, requiring all Perſons to Subſcribe the *Old Covenant*, in hopes of giving Satisfaction to the Diſcontented Party by that Condeſcention, and by another *Declaration* of his Pleaſure anent Anulling the *Service-*

(*a*) *Heyl. Ibid.* P. 362, 363. (*b*) *Laud's Life*, P. 364. (*c*) *Ruſh. Collect.* Par. 2. p. 831.

Book

Book, *Book of Canons*, and *High Commiſſion*, diſcharging the preſſing of the Practice of the *Five Articles* of *Perth* But the Peoples Jealouſies of the unlimited Power of their Biſhops were grown then ſo high, that nothing would ſatisfie 'em but the Abolition of that *New Order*, which had been impoſed upon 'em (as they conceiv'd) contrary to their *Old National Covenant*, by which they Judg'd themſelves obliged to maintain the *Preſbyterian Government*.

However, the *Scotch-Biſhops*, after ſome heſitation, did upon *Octob.* 5. 1638. Sign the *Old Confeſſion of Faith* (which had been Subſcribed at firſt by K. *James*, and his Houſhold, in the Year 1580. and afterwards by Perſons of all Ranks, in the Year 1581. by Ordinance of the Lords of the *Secret Council*, and Acts of the *General Aſſembly*. And again was Subſcrib'd by all ſorts of Perſons in the Year 1590. with a *General Band* annex'd, for Maintenance of the true Religion, and the King's Perſon)

But being ſenſible that this *Confeſſion* favour'd *Preſbytery*, they Sign'd it with theſe Reſtrictions, *viz.* "That they did not hereby Abjure or Condemn the *Epiſcopal Government*, and "the *Five Articles* of *Perth*; and that by adhering to the Diſcipline of the Reformed Kirk of "*Scotl.* they mean not any *Immutability* of that *Preſbyterial Government* which was *Anno* 1581 (*a*).

By this it appears, That the *Preſbyterian* was the *Ancient Government* of the Kirk of *Scotland*, to which they were obliged by an *Ancient Covenant*, long before 38, and that *Epiſcopacy* was an *Innovation* upon their *Firſt Conſtitution*.

I mention theſe things by the by, to vindicate the *preſent Eſtabliſhment* of the *Church* of *Scotland*, as not only agreeable to the *Scotch-Inclination*, but to the *Ancient Scotch-Confeſſion*; and therefore agreeable to their *Inclinations*, becauſe agreeable to their *Confeſſion*.

The *Rector* baſely Reflects upon the Act of *Settling Preſbytery* in *Scotland* (though touch'd by the *Royal Scepter*) becauſe it makes Presbytery *moſt agreeable to the Inclination of the Scotch Nation*, *which is juſt ſuch another Reaſon* (ſaith he) *as an Adulterer alſo might give for his Wantonneſs* (*b*).

He might more truly have ſaid, which is juſt ſuch another Reaſon as an *honeſt Man* might give for enjoying the *Wife of his Youth*, which had been violently detain'd from him, as *Michal* was from *David*.

The Words which he reflects on, are His Majeſty's own Words, in his Letter of Inſtructions to his Commiſſioner in *Scotland*; though the Rector would Reproach the Preſbyterians, he ſhould have ſpoken with more reſpect to the King, and not ſo unhandſomly Reflect on His Majeſty's Words, to whom he owes a greater deference.

The *Act* affirms the *Preſbyterian Church Government to be agreeable to the Word of God*, *and moſt conducive to the Advancement of true Piety and Godlineſs*. But the *Rector* wiſely overlooks theſe Words, which would have ſpoil'd his wanton Compariſon.

The ſame Statute Eſtabliſheth the *Confeſſion of Faith*, containing the Sum and Subſtance of the Doctrine of the *Reformed Churches*, and revives the *Preſbyterian Church Government and Diſcipline*, which had been Ratified and Eſtabliſhed by the 114 Act, *Ja.* 6. Parl. 12. *Anno.* 1592. and thereafter receiv'd by the *general Conſent* of the Scotch Nation (*c*). If the Scotch Inclination be agreeable *to the Word of God*, their ancient *Confeſſion of Faith*, and the old *Laws of the Kingdom*, I hope it's a little more juſtifiable than the *wanton Inclinations* of an *Adulterer*.

I crave the Reader's Pardon for this *Digreſſion*, occaſion'd by the *Rector's Impertinent Reflection* upon the *Church-Government* of *Scotland*.

I have done with his *firſt Reaſon*, when I have noted the laſt Words of it —— *And* England, *even a great part of the Univerſities*, *were running to the ſame exceſs of Riot*. I preſume he means they were not well affected to Epiſcopacy.

Preſbytery is *exceſs of Riot* with this Gentleman. I remember the time when *not running into exceſs of Riot* was Crime enough to bring a Man under Suſpicion of being a *Preſbyterian*. Whether the *Univerſities* have improved in *Morals* ſince they were rid of *Preſbytery*, I

(*a*) *Ruſh. Ibid.* P. 786. (*b*) P. 25. (*c*) *Hiſt. of the late Revol. in* Scotl. P. 252, 253.

will not presume to Determine, but the *Corruption of Manners* which too many bring with them thence, is no great *Demonstration* of it.

But it will not be amiss to take a view of the state of *Cambridge* in 1638, when and where the first Corruption happened. It was far from being *Presbyterian* or *Puritan*.

Six of the Heads of Colledges were fully in the Interests of Archbishop *Laud*, *viz.* Dr. *Cousins*, Mr. of *Peterhouse*; Dr. *Laney*, Mr. of *Pembroke-Hall*; Dr. *Martin*, Mr. of *Queens* Colledge; Dr. *Pasch*, Mr. of *Clare-Hall*; Dr. *Beal*, Mr. of St. *John's*; Dr. *Stern*, Mr. of *Jesus*.

These were all High Men for Bishop *Laud*, and were afterwards put out by the Parliament.

The Six following were more moderate, but fully for the King, and Church of *England*, *viz.* Dr. *Collins*, *Regius* Professor, Provost of King's Colledge; Dr. *Samuel Ward*, Professor of Divinity, and Mr. of *Sidney* Colledge; Dr. *Holdsworth*, Mr. of *Emanuel*; Dr. *Brownrig*, Mr. of *Catharine-Hall*; Dr. *Comber*, Mr. of *Trinity*; Dr. *Smith*, Mr. of *Magdalen*. All these were put out by the Parliament, only Dr. *Smith* died about the beginning of 1643.

The Three following were not put out by the Parliament, but were far from being look'd upon as *Puritans* or *Presbyterians*, *viz.*

Dr. *Bainbrig*, Mr. of *Christ's* Colledge; Dr. *Love*, Mr. of *Bennet* Colledge; Dr. *Eden*, a Civilian, Mr. of *Trinity-Hall*.

Dr. *Badgecroft*, Mr. of *Caius* Colledge, was a Person of little Note, but whether he Died in his Place, or was put out, I cannot learn.

This State of *Cambridge* was communicated to me by the Learned and Judicious Mr. *Francis Tallents*, who was a Student then in 38.

By this it appears what a ridiculous Story it is, that the *Universities* were running into the same Excess of Riot with *Scotland* in 1638. But I proceed to his 2d Argument, *viz.*

Argument II.

" The Corruption in appearance favours the *Dissenters* and their Design against " *Episcopacy*. If then any, they may be suspected for being willing to have it at least " continued and propagated.

I Answer:

1. He durst not say, the *Corruption favours the* Dissenters, for he knows the contrary; but he slily says, it does *in appearance* favour 'em. This *appearance* is only to himself, for I believe no *Dissenter* ever thought of it.

2. I know no Principle of any sober *Dissenters* that is favoured by this Corruption.

It is the profest Principle of the *Presbyterians*, " That no man ought to take upon him " the Office of a Minister of the Gospel, until he be lawfully called, and Ordained there- " unto by the Presbytery. See the Directory for *Ordination*.

Both *Presbyterians* and *Congregational*-Men, whom he *disjunctively* accuseth, have declared their United Judgment about the Ministry in the *Heads of their Agreement* (Printed at *London* 1691) in which they Unanimously declare for the *Election* and *Ordination* of such as undertake the Ministerial Office, the former they ascribe to the *People*; the latter to the *Elders* or *Pastors*. Chap. 2. *Of the Ministry*.

This

This then is the pernicious Principle which he fancies the *Diſſenters* would ſupport by corrupting *Act.* 6. 3. *viz.* that *Ordinarily the People have power to chooſe their own Miniſters.* This I confeſs is aſſerted by the *United Brethren.*

And cou'd they be under any Temptation to corrupt a Text of Scripture to aſſert a Principle that may be juſtified by *expreſs Scripture*, and is aſſerted in this very place without any corrupt Reading? *Act.* 6. 3. *Wherefore, Brethren, look ye out among you Seven Men of honeſt report, full of the Holy Ghoſt and Wiſdom, whom we may appoint over this buſineſs.*

Here the People chooſe the Deacons, the Apoſtles by Impoſition of Hands and Prayer, Ordain or Appoint the Perſons ſo choſen.

The Rector himſelf, in another Mood, allows this power to the People, or Multitude of Believers. For thus he ſpeaks, " The Apoſtles commanded the People to chooſe " ſeven men, *Act.* 6. 3. So St. *Peter* exhorted them to chooſe one. *. Again, " The " choice of the Perſons to be preſented unto the Apoſtles, was made by the People. †.

Whether the Rector of *Bury* were according to this Apoſtolical practice, choſen by the People, he himſelf beſt knows, and the good People of *Bury* may do well to conſider.

Behold here our Accuſer aſſerts the very Principle, in favour of which he pretends the *Presbyterians* or *Congregational* Men (for he knows not which) have corrupted the Word of God.

Now ſuppoſe a peeviſh *Recriminator* ſhould retort the Charge upon him, and ſay, there is ſhrewd ſuſpicion that the Rector of *Bury hath contributed to the corrupting of* Act. 6. 3. *at leaſt to the continuance and encreaſe of it*, §; becauſe it is done in favour of the *Popular Principle* he maintains; what can the Rector ſay for himſelf? He ſtands condemned out of his own Mouth. If his Argument be good againſt the *Diſſenters*, it's good alſo againſt himſelf. For he allows the People as much Power in making their Miniſters as the *Diſſenters* do. Either then let him honeſtly acquit his Brethren, or condemn himſelf. They are conſcious to their own innocency; let him, who is acquainted with the *ſecret practices* of the Preſs, come off as well as he can.

3. The altering of *we* into *ye* in *Act.* 6. 3. cannot be imputed to the *Diſſenters*, or to any Deſign of theirs to *aſſert the Peoples power of ſetting up their own Miniſters*, p. 25. becauſe the Seven Deacons in *Act.* 6. 3. were no Miniſters of the Word and Sacrament, in the Judgment of the *Diſſenters*. They have all along pleaded, That the Deacons in *Act.* 6. were *Miniſters of Tables*, and not of the *Word*. Is it likely they ſhould corrupt a Text to aſſert the *Peoples Power in making Goſpel Miniſters*, which in their Opinion ſpeaks not of thoſe that Miniſter in *Goſpel Myſteries?*

" It belongs not to the Office of Deacons (ſaith the *Weſtminſter* Aſſembly) to Preach " the Word or adminiſter the Sacraments, but to take ſpecial care in diſtributing to the " neceſſities of the Poor. See their Advice to the Parliament concerning Church-Government, in the *Directory*.

Argument III.

" On the contrary it cannot (ſaith our Accuſer) with any colour of reaſon be imagined " that the Epiſcopal Party deſign'd to corrupt this place, *p.* 24.

Anſwer.

This proves nothing againſt the *Diſſenters*, nor do they charge the *Epiſcopal Party* with any deſign of corrupting it, tho the Preſs was in their hands, and ſtrictly guarded againſt the *Puritans*, when it was firſt done, if it was in the Year 1638, as he ſuppoſes.

* *Tent. Novum*, p. 4. † p. 3. § Serm. p. 23.

" Nor will any one of ſence (adds he) believe that the *Epiſcopal* Party, were willing to " have that thruſt out of the Scripture, upon which their Church Government ſeems to " be built; or to ſubſtitute in its room what in appearance, overthrows their Polity, *ibid.*

I never underſtood before, that the Epiſcopal Government was built on this Act of the Apoſtles in ordaining Deacons. Doubtleſs the Epiſcopal Party will reckon themſelves highly obliged to this Maſter-Builder, who hath ſupported the Foundations of their Government by ſo ſtrong an Argument as is here propoſed, *viz. The Apoſtles Ordained Deacons to ſerve Tables, therefore the Church ought to be govern'd by Biſhops.* But he ſpoils all again by ſaying, *That their Church Government* ſeems *to be built on this Scripture*, which, in plain *Engliſh*, is as much as if he had ſaid, *it is not really built upon it.* This overthrows his own Reaſon, *That it was their intereſt not to corrupt it*; ſo that their Cauſe not being *really ſupported* by this Text, they might be the Authors of the Corruption, according to the Rector's way of arguing.

Thus the *Epiſcopal* Party are more obliged to the Charity of the *Diſſenters* in acquitting 'em from a deſigned Corruption of this place, than to the *ſtrength* of the Rector's Argument.

Argument IV.

" That Party ought in all Reaſon to be ſuſpected of Foul-Play herein, who under " colour of this new Text of Scripture, aſſert and ſupport the new Popular Government " of the Church, as ſome of the *Presbyterians* do at this day.

For Proof of this he tells us a " Memorable Story (as he calls it) of a *Cameronian* (one " of the moſt rigid Sects of the *Scotch* Preſbyterians) who Preaching *ſome Years ſince*, " concerning the Peoples Power of ſetting up their own Teachers, urged this corrupt " Reading for Proof.

Anſwer.

1. It is a pretty way of proving that the *Engliſh* Preſbyterians aſſert the Popular Government of the Church from this Text, becauſe a *Scotch Cameronian* has done ſo *ſome Years ſince.*

2. I expected he would have inſtanced in ſome *Engliſh* Preſbyterians that had aſſerted the *new Popular Government*, as he calls it, from this falſe reading, which he chargeth on the *Diſſenters*; but for Proof againſt the *Engliſh* Diſſenters, he ſends us to the *Scotch Presbyterians*, and to the moſt Rigid amongſt them. Does our *Accuſer* here manage his Evidence with the leaſt ſhew of Common Honeſty? He puts in a Charge againſt the Body of *Engliſh* Diſſenters, and brings in for Guilty, a ſingle *Scotch Cameronian.*

3. The *Scotch* Evidence is by Hear-ſay, without ſo much as naming the *Perſon, Time* or *Place*, nor producing any Vouchers for the Proof of it. He promiſed us a good *circumſtantial proof*, p. 23. and he gives us one diveſted of all its *circumſtances.*

He picks up a ſpurious Story, perhaps in the next *Coffee-Houſe* or *Ale-Houſe*, that carries not the leaſt Evidence of Truth with it, and this he legitimates as far as his Word will go, and recommends from the Pulpit as a *ſacred Oracle* of God.

I will not lay the *Brat* at the *Rector's* Door, but ſince he is an Undertaker for it, he ought to produce the *true Father*, leſt he tempt ſuch as know him not, to ſuſpect he is the Man.

I have more Charity for him (as little as he hath for us) than to impute the *Original* of the Fable unto him, but he cannot be excuſed from *taking up a reproach againſt his Neighbour*, which is inconſiſtent with the Character of a Citizen of *Zion*, *Pſal.* 15. 3.

4. It is ſcarce Credible, That a *Cameronian* Preſbyterian ſhould aſſert a Doctrine directly contrary to the Preſbyterian Principles. It's well known none is admitted into the Miniſtry in *Scotland*, without the *laying on of the hands of the* Preſbytery.

5. Sup-

5. Suppose some ignorant *Cameronian* had been abused by that *corrupt reading* (which we have no reason to believe on the Rector's word) and if he had abused others by a wrong *Quotation*, must the Error of one Man be charg'd upon the whole Church of *Scotland*? And must the Error of one *Scotch-man* be charg'd upon all the *English* Presbyterians? This is such a piece of *Justice*, as none will defend, but a *Haman*, who seeks to be reveng'd of all the *Jews*, because one *Mordecai* had offended.

Thus I have Examined his Four *Circumstantial Proofs*, which appear to be as *silly* as they are *malicious*.

He suggests one thing more in a Marginal Note, which I had almost over-looked.

" The Corruption (saith he) crept in first in the year 1638, in a Bible Printed at *Cam-*
" *bridge* by *Tho. Buck* and *Roger Daniel*, Printers to the University; the latter of which
" was indeed the Manager of the Press, and in the Interest of that *Presbyterian*
" Party.

1. Whether *R. Daniel* was in the Interest of the Presbyterian Party, I know not; but I have no cause to believe it, because he affirms it. He hath made his Word too cheap already to be taken for an Oracle.

A Gentleman * that was in *Cambridge* in 36, and continued *Fellow of a Colledge* till 54, assures me he knew *Tho. Buck* very well, and gives this Character of him, that he was an Eminent, Grave Church-of-*England* Man, and one of the Ornaments of it, and the Principal Manager of the Press. The same Gentleman tells me, he knew *Roger Daniel* also, but he was never Reputed to be a *Puritan*, nor is it likely, that Mr. *Buck* would bring in a person of the *Puritan* Principles.

2. But suppose he were a *Presbyterian*, (which is not very likely, considering what a watchful Eye Arch-Bishop *Laud* had upon the Printing-Presses at that time) may not a Man be a *Presbyterian* without being a corrupter of the Word of God? We have proved already, that the Corruption of *Act.* 6. 3. favours the *Presbyterians*, no more than it doth the *Episcopal Party*.

3. He acquits *R. Daniel* by a kind of Self-Contradiction from a *design'd Corruption* of the place, for he himself acknowledges the first Corruption to be an Oversight, a meer Error of the Press, and an accidental Slip, *p* 27.

4. I find a *Cambridge* Edition of the Bible in Twelves, in the Year 1648. by *R. Daniel*, which hath *we*, and not *ye*, in *Acts* 6. 3. *Whom we may appoint*. This is a clear Evidence, That *Daniel's* Edition in 38, was not designedly Corrupted, for then he would have repeated it in a time when the Press was in the Power of the Anti-Episcopal-Party.

It's true, the Error has been repeated since in several Impressions of the English Bible, but without any Influence or Connivance of the Dissenters, as he unworthily Suggests.

An Error in one Impression is easily propagated, because the Frames of the Bible are often kept intire, and not broken by Half Sheets, as in Printing other Books, and so the same Set of Frames serves for a Second and Third Impression, and so forward, until the Letters decay and grow useless.

* Mr. *F. Tallents* of *Salop*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

More Conſiderations to ſhew the Falſity of the Rector's *Charge.*

1. NO Proteſtant Diſſenters have ever Vindicated that Corrupt Reading, or urged it in favour of a popular Government of the Church, in any of their Writings againſt the Biſhops and Ceremonies.

Let him Examine all that has been written ſince 1638, to 1696, and Produce, if he can, any one Argument Supported by this Falſe Reading. Had the Diſſenters deſignedly Corrupted this place to favour their Deſign againſt Epiſcopacy, the Corruption would have appear'd one time or other in ſome of their Polemic Diſſertations.

2. The Diſſenters have Written ſeveral Commentaries and Annotations on the Holy Bible, perhaps more than the Epiſcopal Party, and many of them have written on *Acts* 6. 3. and not one of them have attempted to Confirm the Corrupt Reading of it. Mr. *Baxter's* Second Edition reads, *Whom we may appoint:* So do the Continuators of Mr. *Pool*; ſo doth *Du-Veil* on the *Acts*, though he was an *Anabaptiſt*, as I am inform'd. Mr. *Clark*, in his Quarto Edition of the New Teſtament hath *ye*, but by a miſtake of the Printer, for his Marginal Notes are not corrupt, and the Error is rectified in his Fol. Edit. Printed at *Lond.* 1690. That latter Edition hath *we*.

3. Had the Corruption been deſign'd in favour of the Diſſenters, it would have been promoted when they were uppermoſt, and had the power of the Preſs.

I have taken a little Pains to examine the Editions of moſt Years between 1640, and 1660, when the Anti-Epiſcopal Party were in the Aſcendant, and I find 'em generally right in *Acts* 6. 3.

For more Satisfaction to the Inquiſitive Reader, I will exhibit the Editions of each Year, which are as followeth:

The Impreſſion of the Bible in

1638 *London*, by *Robert Barker*, Octavo, hath *we*, (and not *ye*) in *Acts* 6. 3.
1639 ——by *Barker* hath *we*.
1639 ——by *Barker* and *Bill*, we.
1639 *Cambr.* by *Th. Buck* and *Roger Daniel*, we.
1640 *Lond.* by *R. Barker*, Twelves, *we*.
1642 *Amſterdam*, with *Beza* and *Jun.* Notes, Folio, *we*. This Edition is much Miſ-Printed.
1642 *Edinburgh*, by *Evan Tyler*, 24. we.
1642 *Lond.* by *Barker*, Octavo, *we*.
1643 *Cambr.* by the Printers to the Univer. *we*.
1643 *Amſterd.* Fol. with the *Geneva* Notes *we*.
1644 *Amſterd.* Twelves, *we*.
1646 ——by *Bentley*, we.
1646 *Lond.* by the Aſſigns of *J. Bill*, and *C. Barker*, we.
1646 ——by the Comp. of Stationers, *we*.
1647 ——by *Barker* and the Aſſigns of *Bill*, we.
1647 ——by the Company of Stationers, *we*.
1648 ——by *Will. Bentley*, we.
1648 ——by the Comp. of Stationers, we.

1648 ——by *R. Barker* and Assigns of *F. Bill*, we.
1648 ——by *Evan Tyler*, we.
1648 *Cambr.* by *R. Daniel*, Twelves, we.
1649 *Lond.* by the Comp. of Stationers, we.
1649 ——by the Company of Stationers, *Octavo*, we.
1649 ——by the Company of Stationers, Quarto, with *Geneva* Notes, we.
1650 ——by *Roger Norton*, Octavo, we.
1650 ——by the Comp. of Stat. large *Oct.* we.
1651 ——by the Comp. of Stationers, we.
1651 ——by *Roger Norton*, *Octavo*, we.
1652 ——by the Company of Stationers, *Octavo*, we.
1652 ——by *F. Field*, Printer to the Parliament of *England*, *Twelves*, we.
1653 ——by *F. Field*, Printer to the Parl. *Twelves*, we.
1653 ——by *Field*, 24. we.
1653 ——by *Evan Tyler*, we.
1653 ——for *Giles Calvert*, we.
1653 ——by *F. Field*, Parl. Print. we.
1654 ——by *Evan Tyler*, we. 24.
1655 ——by *Norton*, we.
1655 —— by *E. T.* for the Society of Stat. we.
1656 ——by *H. Hills*, and *F. Field*, *Twelv.* we.
1656 ——by *Fo. Field*, one of his Highness's Printers, 8vo. we.
1657 ——by *James Flesher*, we.
1657 *Cambr.* by *Fo. Field*, large 8vo, ye.
1657 ——by *R. Daniel*, ye.
1658 ——by *Fo. Field*, one of his Highness's Printers, *Twelv.* we.
1658 ——by *Fo. Field*, one of his Highness's Printers, 24. we.
1659 *Cambr.* by *Fo. Field*, large Fol. ye.

By this Table of Editions it appears, That most Impressions from 40 to 60 are right. I cou'd yet find but *three* Editions that have *ye* in *Acts* 6. 3. during the whole time of the Long Parliament, which I have noted in the Year 1657, one by *Field*, the other by *Daniel*, and a third by *Field*, 59. These must be accidental, because *Flesher*'s Edition of 1657 is right, and *Field* and *Daniel* are right in the Editions of other Years.

All which makes it very Evident, the Presbyterians had no design to falsifie the Sacred Text.

4. Several Editions in King *Charles* the Second's time, when the *Bishops*, and not the *Dissenters* had the Management of the Press, are Corrupt, and have, *whom ye may appoint*, in *Acts* 6. 3.

I will present the Reader with the true and false Editions in two distinct Tables, from the Year 1660, to this present Year 1696.

The true Editions that have *whom we may appoint*, are as follows:

1660. *Lord.* by *Hills* and *Field*, large Octavo, *we*.
1662. *Cann*'s Bible *we*.
1663. *Cambr.* J. Field, Quarto, *we*.
1664. *Cann*'s Bible with References hath *we*, though a very Corrupt Edition.
1666. *Cambr.* by *F. Field*, Quarto, *we*.
1669. *Lond.* by *Bill* and *Barker*, *we*.
1669. *Savoy*, by *Bill* and *Barker*, large Octavo, *we*.
1669. *Lond.* by *Barker*, we.
1669. *Lond.* by *Bill* and *Barker*, Octavo, *we*.
1670. *Cambr.* by *F. Hays*, Quarto, *we*.
1673. *Lond.* by *Barker* and *Bill*, Octavo, *we*.

1675.

1675. *Oxford*, Quarto, *we*.
1675. *Lond.* by the Assigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, large Octavo, *we*.
1675. *Cambr.* by *F. Hays*, Quarto, *we*.
1676. *Lond.* by *Chr. Barker*, Quarto, *we*.
1677. *Cambr.* by *F. Hays*, Quarto, *we*.
1678. *Lond.* by *Bill*, *Barker*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, Octavo, we.
1679. *Oxford*, Quarto, we.
1680. *Cambr.* by *F. Hays*, Quarto, we.
1681. *Edingburgh*, by the Heir of *Andr. Anderson*, Printer to the King, Quarto, we.
1682. *Oxford*, Octavo, we.
1683. *Oxford*, Quarto, we.
1684. *Lond. Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, we.
1684. *Oxford*, Fol. we.
1685. ——*Twelves*, we, and another 24 we.
1686. ——we.
1687. *Lond.* by *Bill*, *Hills* and *Newcomb*, we.
1687. *Oxford*, we.
1688. *Lond.* by *Bill*, *Hills* and *Newcomb*, we.
1688. *Oxford*, 24. we.
1689. *Oxford*, we.
1690. *Lond. Chr. Bill*, and *Tho. Newcomb*, large Octavo, we.
1691. ——by *Bill* and *Newcomb*, Twelves, we.
1691. ——by *Bill* and *Newcomb*, Octavo, we.
1692. ——by *Bill*, and the Executrix of *Tho. Newcomb*, we.
1693. ——by *Bill*, we.
1693. ——by *Bill*, and the Executrix of *Newcomb*, we.
1694. ——by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, we
1695 ——by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, we.
1695. *Oxford*——we
1695. *London* the New Testament; with Mr. *Baxter*'s Notes, we.
1696. ——by *Bill* and others, we.
1696. ——by *Chr. Bill*, and Executrix of *Tho. Newcomb*, we.

It's observable here, 1. That Two Editions of *Canne*, which is all I have seen of his, have *We*. He was a rigid *Brownist*, but did not mis-print this place.

2. Mr. *Baxter*'s Edition of the New Testament, for which he was Fined and Imprisoned, hath *We*. His very Enemies cou'd not charge him with corrupting the Sacred Text.

3. The *Scotch* Edition in 1681. hath *We*; so hath a former Edition which I noted in 1642, and three more by *Evan Tyler*, the *Scotch* Printer in 53, 54, 55. These are all the *Scotch* Editions I have yet seen, by which we may judge of the rest: Tho he confidently affirms, without the least Proof, *That the* Scotch *Bibles are generally faulty in this passage*. p. 28. And, *That the* Scotch *Kirk tampers with, and refines upon the Word of God*. P. 26. But perhaps, I may give a more full account of the *Scotch* Bibles hereafter.

I will subjoin an Account of such faulty Editions as I have met with from 1650 to 1696, which are as followeth:

1650. *London*, by *John Field*. ye *may appoint*, Act. 6. 3.
1661. *Cambridge*, by *F. Field*, large 8vo. ye
1663. *London*, by *Bill* and *Barker*——ye
1665. ——by *F. Bill* and *Chr. Barker*, ye.
1666. ——by *Bill* and *Barker*, ye
1668. ——by *Bill* and *Barker*, ye.
1668. *Savoy*, by *Bill* and *Barker*, ye.

1670.

1670. *Savoy* by the Aſſigns of *John Bill* and *Chr. Barker*, ye.
1671. ——— by the Aſſigns of *J. Bill* and *Chr. Barker*, ye (large 8vo.)
1671. *Oxford*, ſmall 8vo. ye.
1672. *Savoy*, by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, 12. ye.
1672. *London*, by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, 24. ye.
1673. — by *Bill* and *Barker*. 24. ye.
1673. — by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, 8vo. ye.
1674. —— by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, ye.
1675. —— by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, 12. ye.
1676 ——by *Bill* and *Barker*, 12. ye.
1676. ——by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, 24. ye.
1677. ——by the Aſſigns of *Bill* and *Barker*, ye.
1678. ——by *Bill*, *Barker*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, ye.
1679. ——by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, large 8vo. ye.
1679. ——by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, 12. ye.
1680. *Oxford*, 8vo. ye.
1680. *London*, by the Aſſigns of *Bill*, *Newccomb* and *Hills*, ye.
1681. *Oxford*, ſmall 8vo. ye.
1681. *London*, by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, ye. 8vo.
1681. ——by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, 24. ye.
1682. —— by *Bill*, *Newcomb* and *Hills*, ye.
1682. ——by *Hills* and *Newcomb*, ye.
1682. ——by the Aſſigns of *Jo. Bill*, *Tho. Newcomb* and *Henry Hills*, large 8vo. ye.
1683. ——by *Hills* and *Newcomb*, ye.
1683. ——by the Aſſigns of *Bill*, and by *Hills* and *Newcomb*, ye.
1684. —— by the Aſſigns of *Bill*, and by *Hills* and *Newcomb*, ye.
1685. —— by the Aſſigns of *J. Bill*, and by *Hills* and *Newcomb*, ye.
1686. —— by *Charles Bill*, *H. Hills* and *Tho. Newcomb*, ye.
1687. —— by *Ch. Bill*, *Hills* and *Newcomb*, ye.
1689. *Oxford*, large 8vo. ye.
1691. —— 12. ye.

Obſerve in theſe Editions:

1. They are all *Octavo's* or *Duodecimo's* of the larger or ſmaller ſize, but where the contrary is expreſſed.

2. I find no leſs than Thirty Eight Editions that are faulty in *Act.* 6. 3. Our Author tells us " That upon Examination he hath found the firſt accidental ſlip repeated " ſince in at leaſt half a dozen Impreſſions of the Bible here in *England*, *p.* 27. And in another place he ſaith, " His Diligence and Obſervation has not been a little, and ma- " naged with all care and faithfulneſs in examining this point, *P.* 22. If his *Faithfulneſs* be no greater than his *Diligence* and *Obſervation*, I doubt it's very little. Wonderful Diligence! to be able to diſcover about Six or Seven faulty Impreſſions in near Forty.

3. I can meet but with two faulty Editions in King *William's* Time, and both in *Oxford*, " which, he ſays, has, for ought he can learn, been ſomewhat happier, in this kind, than " her Siſter *Cambridge*, *P.* 22. But in this alſo, he is ſomewhat miſtaken, as he is in his other accounts: For I find Five *Oxford* Editions that are faulty. And I hope, he will not ſay, That Preſbytery was in the Aſcendant when theſe Corruptions happened there.

4. Different Editions by the ſame hand do vary, ſome having *we*, others *ye*, which is an evidence the Corruption is accidental. *Bill* and *Barker's* Edition in *Octavo*, 1673, hath *We*; another Edition by *Bill* and *Barker* in 24's, 1673, hath *Ye*. So in 1678, and in 1687.

5. From the whole it appears, that moſt of the Corrupt Editions were in K. *Charles* the II's time, when the *Epiſcopal Party* were in the Aſcendant, and had the ſole Management of the Preſs.

Therefore let the Rector lay the Saddle on the right Horſe, and when he has done, let him try his Skill, by another *Tentamen novum*, to make it fit as eaſie as he can. I will not intrude upon his Province, to enquire into the Reaſons of multiplying Corrupt Editions in that Reign, in which *Debauchery* and *Corruption of Manners were in the Aſcendant*, which might render it a little difficult for the *Maſter-Printers*, to get *ſober* and *conſcientious Correctors*.

I am of this Gentleman's mind, That ſome effectual courſe ſhould be taken to rectifie not only this (which is all his concern) but *other* miſtakes of the Preſs; but we differ in the *Method of curing* theſe Evils.

He recommends to thoſe in Authority, the *burning of one or more Bibles* thus depraved, as a proper Remedy, *P.* 27, 28.

I confeſs, I love not the burning of the Holy *Bible*, eſpecially for one *literal miſtake*, becauſe by the ſame Rule, all our Bibles might be in danger of the Flames, for it will be very difficult, if not next to impoſſible, to find one Bible without a *literal fault*. And it is not fit the *Sacred Scriptures* ſhould be obnoxious to the Fiery Zeal of every *peeviſh Critick*, or *deſigning* Adverſary, who may take occaſion to pick quarrels with 'em, and demand *Judgment* againſt 'em for every *Miſdemeanour* of the Preſs.

Tell it not in *Gath!* That a *Son of the Church*, and a *Proteſtant* Divine, ſhould make a Motion for the *burning of Bibles*, at this time of day, when our *Popiſh Adverſaries* are threatning us, and ready to add *more Fuel to the Fire*, to conſume all the reſt.

But I leave this *Incendiary* to walk in the light of his own Fire, and to warm himſelf at the *Sparks* that he hath *kindled*.

I humbly conceive, the moſt proper means of obtaining more *Correct Bibles*, would be the employing of perſons of greater *Diligence* and *Obſervation*, and of greater *Care* and *Faithfulneſs* than the Rector hath ſhew'd in examining the *Errata* of the Preſs.

Had he evidenced as good an Intereſt in theſe *qualifications*, as he pretends to, *p.* 22. he might have bid Fair for the Office of a *Corrector* of the Preſs, which would have enabled him to ſerve his Generation to better purpoſe, than he can do by *Publiſhing Calumnies in the Name of God*.

CHAP. IV.

Vindicating Mr. B. *and Exhibiting Ten Inſtances of the* Rector's *corrupt way of Citing the Holy Scriptures.*

IN his *Epiſtle* he accuſeth him alſo with corrupting the Word of God.

His Words are theſe, ——"Nor is this (of *Act.* 6. 3.) the only Inſtance of this "kind. In the *Diſſenters* Petition for Peace above Years ſince, *Act.* 15. 18. "(it ſhould be 28.) is thus cited—— *To lay upon you no greater burden than neceſſary* "*things*, that ſmall word *theſe* being cunningly left out meerly to ſupport their Propo- "ſition. Mr. *B.* who drew up the Petition, and ſince has been publickly charg'd for thus "abuſing the Scripture, though he forgot not to acquaint us, with the moſt trivial, yea, "ridiculous Paſſages of his Life, yet had not the ingenuity to Confeſs his Error, nor yet "the courage to palliate it with any Excuſe.

Anſwer.

That great Man was not at leiſure to take notice of, nor diſpoſed to Anſwer every trifling Accuſer. This Accuſation is as *groundleſs* as it is *malicious*, and therefore Mr. *B.* might eaſily paſs it over in ſilence.

He

He that will make Silence an Argument of Guilt, would have Condemned the moſt Innocent Perſon that ever was, *Matth.* 26. 63.

Mr. B. urged that Text to prove that the Apoſtles impoſed only neceſſary things, and did not make unneceſſary things neceſſary, by meer Impoſition, his Words are theſe:

" The Apoſtles and Elders, *Act.* 15.28. declare unto the Churches, that it ſeemed Good " to the Holy Ghoſt and them, to lay upon them no greater burden, than neceſſary things; " impoſing them becauſe antecedently neceſſary (for that is given as the reaſon of their Se- " lection and Impoſition) and not only making unneceſſary things neceſſary, by Impoſition, " for then the Impoſition had been unneceſſary, tho it was not a ſimple, unchangeable ne- " ceſſity, yet it was a neceſſity by accident, *pro tempore & loco*, antecedent to the Impoſi- " tion of that Aſſembly—— *Petit. for Peace. p.* 20. Lond. 1661.

Here I deſire the Reader to obſerve:

1. That Mr. *B.* does not pretend to make a full Recital of the Words of the Decree, but to give the Reaſon upon which it was grounded, and that is, *the neceſſity of the things impoſed.* They were not *neceſſary*, meerly becauſe *impoſed*, but *impoſed* becauſe *neceſſary* under preſent Circumſtances.

Had he cited the very words of the Text, he would have rendred 'em in the ſecond perſon, *It ſeemed Good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden* — But he ſpeaks in the 3d perſon, *It ſeemed Good to the Holy Ghoſt and them, to lay upon them*------ referring to the *Hiſtory*, and not to the very *words* of the Decree.

The Rector may as well quarrel with him for not mentioning the Canons of the Council, *v.* 29. (which he had no occaſion to repeat) as for leaving out the word *theſe*, which evidently points at them.

When Mr. *B.* cites the Words of Scripture, he does it in a different Character, as may be ſeen in that very Page in *1 Cor.* 11.19. which he there quotes in *Italick Letters*; but he refers to *Acts* 15. 28. without changing the form of the Letters, by which 'tis apparent, he did not deſign to tranſcribe the very words of the Text.

It's hard meaſure to Charge a Man, who only refers to a Text of Scripture, or gives the ſenſe of it, with corrupting the Word of God, becauſe he has not tranſcribed the whole *Verſe*.

2. It would have look'd more *generous* in this *Criminator*, to have anſwer'd Mr. B's *Argument* from this place againſt *unneceſſary Impoſitions*, than to blemiſh the Reputation of a dead Man. But it's eaſier to *revile* a Man than to *confute* him.

3. I have reaſon to ſuſpect the Rector took up this *Calumny* at ſecond hand from Dr. *Hook*, to whom he refers in the *Margin*, and never examin'd the truth of it. For thus he begins the Charge---- *In the* Diſſenters *Petition for Peace above years ſince.* He could not tell how many years ſince, and therefore left a *blank*, to be filled up by any body that would do him that kindneſs. Had he perus'd the Petition it ſelf, it would have cured his Ignorance concerning the diſtance of time.

Beſides he cites the Text out of the *Petition* thus—— *To lay upon you no greater burden than neceſſary things.* Whereas if he had taken the Words out of the *Petition* it ſelf, he muſt have exhibited them as I have above—— *to lay upon them no greater burden*——

One may ſee by this what little truſt is to be given to this man's Accuſation, who takes up any *ſilly Calumny*, and reports it again for truth, without once examining whether it be ſo or not: But that is inconſiſtent with the Deſign he had in hand, which was *to Calumniate ſtoutly in hopes ſomething might* ſtick.

4. But ſince the Rector ſo roundly Charges others with corrupting the Word of God, it will not be amiſs to take notice how he treats it himſelf.

I will obſerve a few of his own *Quotations*, which I ſhould have over-look'd, if he had not thus unjuſtly *accuſed* his Brethren of that which he is *notoriouſly guilty himſelf.*

Qui alterum incuſat probri, ipſum ſe intueri oportet.

Thou art inexcuſable, O Man—— *for wherein thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thy ſelf, for thou that judgeſt doeſt the ſame things*, Rom. 2. 1.

I confeſs, I love not *recriminations*, but when a Man is ſo quick-ſighted, as to *behold a*

mote in his brothers Eye, 'tis an *act of Charity* to help him to a Glaſs that may diſcover unto him *ſome of the beam* in his own Eye.

If he pleaſe to re-view the *Scripture-Quotations* in his own Sermon, he'l find many of 'em not exactly rendred. He would reckon it unfair did we go about to aggravate its *Overſights*, and charge him with *poyſoning the fountain-head*, *refining upon the Word of God*, *lying againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, &c. He would ſay, theſe were *hard Words*; and yet this is the Language he gives the *Diſſenters* for a *litteral fault*, which he cannot prove upon them.

Inſtances of his careleſs and looſe way of citing the Scriptures.

I. His very Text from which he takes occaſion to aggravate his Charge againſt us of *Corrupting the Word of God*, is corruptly rendred by him, *Prov.* 30. 6. *Add thou not unto his Word*, ſo the Rector. It ſhould have been, *Add thou not unto his Words*, in the pl. So it is in our *Engliſh* Bibles, &c. ſo it is in the Original *Hebrew* דבריו *verbis ejus*. Here is a *litteral fault*, and ſuch as ſubſtitutes the ſingular number for the plural, in our Rector's very Text. He that ſo grievouſly cenſures others for a *litteral fault*, ſhould tell by what Authority he makes bold to alter (or to uſe his own Dialect, to *corrupt*) the very Text of his Sermon.

He repeats the Text in the ſame manner, in *P.* 1. and 2. and therefore cannot charge the Preſs with this Error.

It's true the variation does not *corrupt the ſenſe*; but allow Men a liberty of a *litteral variation* from the Language of the Holy Ghoſt, the *ſenſe* and *meaning* cannot be long *ſecur'd*.

II. The firſt Scripture that occurs after the Text and Context, is 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. *written for our inſtruction upon whom the ends of the World are come:* So he reads it, (*p.* 1.) but in our *Engliſh* Bibles it is thus—— *written for our* admonition *upon whom*----- Here he changes *admonition* into *inſtruction*, tho the Original be νουθεσία, and properly render'd *admonition* by our *Tranſlators* both here, and in *Eph.* 6. 4. *Titus* 3. 10.

III. His next Allegation is from *Deut.* 4. 2. *Ye ſhall not add unto the Word, neither ſhall ye diminiſh ought from it.* It ought to be thus read, *Ye ſhall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither ſhall ye diminiſh ought from it.* Here he leaves out the Words *which I command you*, without which the ſenſe is imperfect. He condemns Mr. B. for leaving out the word *theſe*, and himſelf leaves out but four Words together, and thoſe alſo eſſential to the ſentence he produceth.

IV. Having compar'd his Text with *Deut.* 2. and 12. 32. he enlargeth his foundations, and ſaith, for which reaſon therefore I would read the Text thus, *add not thou unto his Word, neither diminiſh ought from it*, p. 2.

He may read it as he pleaſes, but thoſe Words, *neither diminiſh ought from it*, are an addition to that Text, which ſaith *add not*. Muſt we tack to every Text what is ſaid in other Scriptures more fully, and make that *explanatory addition* an eſſential part of the Text? And when we have thus fill'd it up from *parallel* Scriptures, ſhall we pretend it ought to be *read* thus? This would create as many various Readings, as there are parallel Texts.

Unhappy *Solomon!* Hadſt thou liv'd in our days to conſult a Man *wiſer than thy ſelf*, he wou'd have taught thee to have put this Saying in a better form, and to write it thus, *add thou not unto his word, neither diminiſh ought from it.* However, thou can'ſt not but take it kindly, that he ſupplies in Reading, the defect of thy Writing.

Our *Hebrew* Bibles have ſeveral *Keri's* and *Cethib's*, in which the Marginal Reading varies from the *Writing* in the Text, as the *Maſorites* have obſerved: But this new *Keri*, or *Reading* eſcaped their Obſervation. It's to be hoped the Learned World will take notice of it in the next Edition of the *Maſora*.

We have all read theſe Words, *neither diminiſh ought from it*, in *Deut.* 4. 2. but a Man may ſooner read out his Eyes, than read the words in the Rector's Text, as it lies in our Bibles.

And

And therefore to help you to the *True Reading* of this place, you muſt make a *Thankful Purchaſe* of the Rectors Sermon for your Inſtruction.

V. He thus cites *Iſa.* 11. 9. That *the knowledge of the Lord might cover the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea.* Our Bibles have it thus, *The Earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.*

Here alſo he not only changes the Conſtruction of the former part of this Sentence, but ſubſtitutes one word for another, *viz. might cover*, inſtead of *ſhall be full.* The Heb. מלאה which we render *ſhall be full*, will not admit of the Rector's Tranſlation. *Schindler* (in his *Lexic. Pentaglot.*) mentions four ſignifications of מלא but not one to the Rector's purpoſe.

Nor will the Lxx's Tranſlation relieve him, for that has ἐπλήσθη, which anſwers our Engliſh *filled*, And I do not find that the other *Gr. Verſions* do vary from the Lxx upon this Text. *Vid. Frag. Veter. Interp. Græc. in Iſa.* 11.

The Rector therefore abuſes this Scripture in the two Inſtances which he condemns in others, viz. *diminiſhing* and *adding.* He *diminiſhes*, by expunging thoſe words, *ſhall be full*; and adds of his own, the words, *might cover.*

VI. He thus quotes *Rev.* 22.18,19. *I certifie to every man*, &c. p. 13. Our Engliſh Bibles have it, *I teſtifie unto every man*-----And the Gr. Συμμαρτυρῶμαι, ought to be ſo rendred. It ſhould ſeem the Rector wanted his Spectacles, and by a miſtake of the Letter read *certify*, for *teſtify.*

VII. He tells us that *We diminiſh from the Word, when we caſt away any, never ſo little part of it* p. 13. And thus he cites *Matth.* 5.18.——*Till Heaven and Earth paſs away, not one jot, or tittle ſhall paſs from the Law.*

Our Bibles render the Verſe thus——*Till Heaven and Earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe* (οὐ μὴ) *paſs from the Law, till all be fulfilled.* Here he leaves out the little word (*one*) which is repeated in the Text, and the weighty words, *in no wiſe*; and over-looks the Concluding words, *till all be fulfilled.*

Doubtleſs the words left out here, are *a little part* of the Scripture; and therefore by his own Doctrine he *diminiſheth* from the Word.

VIII. He thus gives the words of *Acts* 6. 3. *Seek out ſeven Men of honeſt Report, and full of the Holy Ghoſt*, &c. P. 21.

Our Authorized Bibles have it thus, *Look ye out among you ſeven Men*-----Here he puts *ſeek* for *look* (ἐπισκέψασθε) perhaps this alſo was an *Overſight* in *Reading*: But why he ſhould leave out thoſe words, *among you*, I can give as little Reaſon, as he can in charging Mr. *B.* with *abuſing the Scripture*, in leaving out (*theſe*) when he did not pretend to cite the very words of the Text, as the Rector here doth.

But I hope he'll *have the Ingenuity to confeſs his Error, or the Courage to palliate it with an Excuſe*, (*Epiſt.*) the want of which he blames in Mr. *B.*

IX. He exhorts his Bretbren *to lay aſide all guile and hypocriſies*, 1 Pet. 2. 1. P. 26.

The Text runs thus-----*Laying aſide* all malice, *and all guile and hypocriſies, and envies, and evil ſpeakings.*

How he comes to ſkip over *all malice*, and to begin with *guile*, I do not pretend to give a Reaſon; tho' perhaps ſome may tell him, That his Sermon is ſo *full of malice* againſt the Diſſenters, that he was not willing this *troubleſome word* ſhould ſtare him in the face, and create any uneaſineſs of thought to him, in his *warm purſuit* of that Party.

X. I will inſtance in one other Text, which he thus renders, 2 *Pet.* 3.16. *Which they that are Unſtable and Unlearned wreſt, as they do all the other Scriptures, to their own deſtruction.*

In our Bibles the words are thus, *Which they that are Unlearned and Unſtable wreſt, as they do alſo the other Scriptures*, &c.

Here he not only perverts the Order of the Holy Ghoſt, in the words, *Unlearned and Unſtable*; but for *alſo the other Scriptures*, (καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς) he reads *all the other Scriptures.*

Thus we have trac'd him in his *Scripture-Quotations*, in which one might have expected more Exactneſs from ſo *Critical a Cenſor.*

To declaime with such bitterness against Innocent Men, as *Corrupters of the Word of God*, and in the same Breath to cite the Scriptures so *Corruptly*, evidences more of *Hatred* to the Presbyterians, than of *Affection* to the Word of God.

I will not say he had any Design to Corrupt these Scriptures: I believe it was an *Oversight*, which is culpable enough in a Man of his Character, without being aggravated.

The Rector, of any man, should be charitable in his Censures of others, who while he is unjustly charging the *Dissenters* with one *false reading*, has made himself undeniably guilty of *Ten*. *Ten* to *One* is great Odds, and yet our Accuser would be thought a *warm* and *zealous* defender of the Scriptures, for these *Epithets* he gives himself, p. 27.

If ever poor Man has made work for *Repentance*, the Rector has done so in this Sermon (if I may abuse the Word by calling a *Libel* by that name) the chief design of which is to load his Brethren with a *Crime* not to be named among Christians. He tells us, that the *Chief Reason of his undertaking*, was to tax the *Dissenters* with *corrupting the Word of God*. Epist. & p. 2. Nay, he saith, *it is the point he chiefly aimed to insist on*, p. 20.

Now let the World judge, what a *vile thing* it is, to accuse a Considerable Party of Sober Christians, of the most *impious practices*, without the least Proof to support the Charge.

A good Name is better than precious Ointment, and rather to be chosen than great Riches, Eccl. 7.1. *Pro.* 22.1. therefore he that robs me of it, deprives me of that which is more valuable than Gold and Silver. For this Reason, a *false testimony* was Capitally punish'd by the old *Roman* Laws, *Aul. Gell.* xx. 1. And God himself has levelled one of the *Ten Commandments* against this Wickedness. He that said, *Thou shalt not kill*, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, hath also said, *Thou shalt not bear false Witness*.

Men may talk of Religion, and of their Zeal for the Word of God, but when the Tongue *is set on fire of Hell, and full of deadly poyson*, they'll scarce convince the World that they have any great share of the one or the other.

Can any thing be more inconsistent, than at the same time, *to bless God even the Father, and to curse* (or reproach) *men which are made after the similitude of God?* Can there be a greater Instance of this, than for a Man to *aim* at the reviling of his Neighbours as the *Chief Point* he drives at in Preaching the Word of God.

He that violates the Laws of *Truth in his own words*, may be presum'd to have no great regard to the *Truth of Gods Word*.

'Twas a saying of *Pythagoras*, that the Gods had granted unto Men two amiable Blessings, τὸ δὲ ἀληθεύειν καὶ εὐεργετεῖν *to embrace the truth, and to do good.* *

Truth and *Goodness* are *Divine Perfections*, and the contrary to them are the distinguishing Characters of the most *degenerate Spirits*.

I leave it to impartial Judgments to consider how far the Rector has declined a Conformity to the *Divine Pattern*, and imitated the *Accuser of the Brethren*, whose Prime Qualities are *Lying* and *Malignity*.

I have now done with him, and will only offer him this wholsome Counsel at parting, in requital of the Wrong he hath done us.

If he expects a well-grounded-Peace in a Dying-Hour, I would advise him in a penitent manner to ask forgiveness, (1.) Of God, in whose Sacred Name he delivered this *Scandalous Figment*. (2.) Of his *Brethren* the *Dissenters*, whose Reputation he would have mortally wounded, if the poison'd Arrow of a False Tongue could have done it. (3.) Of his *Diocesan*, and that *Publick Assembly*, in whose Ears he Published this Calumny; and (4.) Of that *Honourable Lord*, under whose Name he presumes to *shelter* himself †, while he discharges *Volleys* of Reproaches against a Multitude of Innocent People, whose only Defence is the *Armour of Righteousness*.

When he has proceeded thus far in the Duty of a Penitent, he ought to make what reasonable *satisfaction* he is able, to the injured Party. The *Dissenters* desire no *Damages*,

* *Ælian. Hist. Var.* xii, 59. † *Epist.*

for

for the Prejudices he has violently endeavour'd to have done them: All the *Reparation* they demand, is no more than what himſelf muſt needs judge reaſonable, that is, That he will *burn his Sermon*.

This he cannot juſtly except againſt, for he himſelf hath condemn'd *whole Bibles to be burnt for* one *Corruption of the Sacred Text* †, and if this be a righteous ſentence (as he thinks it is) he cannot but think it highly equitable, That his Sermon ſhould be *caſt into the fire*, which contains Ten Corruptions of the Sacred Text, beſides the *corrupt Deſign* of the whole, to *Libel* his honeſt Neighbours.

This may ſerve as a Touchſtone to try the ſincerity of his *Zeal* to the Word of God, and it's Purity. If it be ſuch as he pretends, he'll make no difficulty of *expiating* his Crime by ſuch a *cheap ſacrifice* as this. For if he can ſacrifice a Bible in revenge of the *Diſſenters* for one *imaginary fault* of theirs, he'll chearfully ſacrifice a poor Sermon in revenge of himſelf for no leſs than *Ten real faults* of his own; for you muſt not be ſo uncharitable, as to think him fonder of his own Productions, than of the *Inſpir'd Writings*.

I ſhall conclude with ſome of the firſt words of his Epiſtle, in which he tells the World, *That he has been perſwaded by ſome private friends to Publiſh his Sermon*.

It does not concern us to know who theſe *private friends* were; perhaps, upon ſecond thoughts, he may take them for *private foes*, that would tempt him to expoſe his blind ſide to the World, by making Publick a falſe Accuſation, which had it been ſuppreſs'd within thoſe Walls, where it was deliver'd, might have paſs'd for a Secret Oracle with ſome Credulous People, and left the injured Party under the Imputation of a baſe Reflection, without any poſſible Relief.

I cannot imagine that either his *Ordinary*, or the *ſober part of the Clergy* would ever *perſwade* him to Publiſh a Calumny, ſo vile in its nature, ſo inconſiſtent in its parts, ſo weakly managed, ſo maliciouſly applied, and ſo viſibly ſupported by ungrounded ſuſpicions, and fabulous Narratives.

But whoever they are, and whatever ends they had, in procuring a Publication of the Sermon, we reckon our ſelves obliged to them, for putting us in a capacity to vindicate our ſelves.

Though, when all is done, the thanks is principally owing to the Rector himſelf, whoſe Singular Good-Will to the *Diſſenters*, inclin'd him to an eaſie compliance with the agreeable Requeſt of his *private friends*.

Some *Jeſuits* have aſſerted, That it's only a Venial Sin to calumniate falſly, to maintain their own honour, and to ruine the Credit of thoſe they take for their Enemies. They have in many caſes notoriouſly practiſed accordingly, §.

Though the Rector does not profeſſedly eſpouſe this Principle, yet his *blind Zeal* hath notoriouſly betray'd him into the ſame Practice.

Perhaps, he'll *be angry, that his foul-play* (to uſe his own words) *is brought upon the ſtage and thus openly*, but juſtly, *taxt*. Epiſt.

It is no more my *diſpoſition than his, to expoſe any man's miſtake, whileſt it keeps in Doors, and contains it ſelf within any bounds of modeſty and privacy*, ibid. But when the ſacred Laws of Truth are boldly and openly violated, and the Wounds of the Church are made to bleed afreſh, by ſuch as ſhould apply healing Remedies, it's high time to un-deceive the World, to aſſert the Intereſts of Religion, and to expoſe the *ſubtle Artifices* of deſigning Men.

† *p.* 27, 28. § *Myſt of Jeſuitiſm*, P. 361. 371. & p. 366. 370. 390. 422.

FINIS.

Advertiſement.

LEST the Rector *ſhould Glory over-much in his Mighty Diſcovery, it is thought convenient to Acquaint the World, That* his *Mr.* Calvin (alias *the Reverend Mr.* Roger Baldwin) *Detected and Expoſed the* ſelf-ſame Miſtake, *long before this* Author, *in an Ordination-Sermon, as ſundry then preſent, are ready to teſtifie.*